

Message Text

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51

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 L-03 SS-15 NSC-10 RSR-01

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R 011254Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7546

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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BEIRUT FOR RCAA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN KU

SUBJ: CIVAIR - PLANNED ARAB CARRIER OPERATIONS TO US

REF: A. MANAMA 0537; B. ABU DHABI 1195; C. BEIRUT 8240; D. STATE

132721

SUMMARY: EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS KUWAIT AMBASSADOR TO US SHAIKH SALEM LIKELY RAISE KUWAIT AIRWAYS LANDING RIGHTS QUESTION NOT LONG AFTER HE RETURNS TO WASHINGTON IN SEPTEMBER. BELIEVE TIME HAS COME FOR DEPARTMENT TO GIVE FRESH LOOK AT QUESTION OF ARAB CARRIERS SERVING US AND US CARRIER SERVICE TO GULF. END SUMMARY

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS RECENTLY WITH KUWAIT AIRWAYS MANAGING DIRECTOR MARZOUK AND KUWAIT AMBASSADOR TO US SHAIKH SALEM, EMBOFF LEARNED KUWAITIS PURSUING PLAN TO REQUEST LANDING RIGHTS IN US. KAC INTENDS BE PART OF ARAB CARRIERS GROUP INCLUDING MEA AND SAUDIA. BASIC PLAN WAS RECENTLY SUMMARIZED IN REF C, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND MARZOUK CONFIRMED MOST OF THE INFO IN THAT CABLE, ALTHOUGH

HE SAID NOTHING ABOUT OTHER ARAB STATES. MARZOUK ADDED THAT KAC WANTS LANDING RIGHTS TO PROTECT ITSELF SHOULD DIFFICULTIES EVER ARISE BUT IT FIRMLY SUPPORTS MODIFIED CONSORTIUM IDEA BEING FORMULATED BY ARAB CARRIERS.

2. SHAIKH SALEM TOLD EMBOFF AT SOCIAL FUNCTION THAT HE HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH KAC OFFICERS HERE AND HE THINKS IT LIKELY THAT SHORTLY AFTER HE RETURNS TO WASHINGTON IN SEPTEMBER HE WILL FORMALLY REQUEST DEPARTMENT SUPPORT. GOK AND KAC WILL AWARE OF PROBLEMS BUT HOPE BE ABLE PERSUADE DEPARTMENT AND CAB OF VALIDITY KUWAIT REQUEST.

3. REF A AND B INDICATE QUESTION US CARRIER SERVICE TO LOWER GULF NOT ONLY REMAINS LIVE ISSUE BUT LIKELY TO BECOME ONE OF INCREASING IMPORTANCE TO AREA AUTHORITIES. PROBLEM OF TRANSATLANTIC CONGESTION IS, OF COURSE, SERIOUS ONE, BUT FIND IT HARD TO UNDERSTAND HOW THREE-TIMES WEEKLY SERVICE FROM MIDDLE EAST WILL SIGNIFICANTLY ADD TO CONGESTION, EXPECIALLY IN LIGHT RECENT ADDITIONAL LANDING RIGHTS GRANTED TO EUROPEAN CARRIERS.

4. IN ADDITION, WE FEEL STRONGLY THAT IF TWA NOT INTERESTED SERVING THIS REGION, OR CANNOT SOON MAKE UP ITS MIND TO DO SO, OTHER CARRIERS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO COME IN. ALTHOUGH WE HAD NOT HEARD OF PAN AM INTEREST IN SERVING ABU DHABI WE HAD HEARD THAT COMPANY WAS FAIRLY SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN AT LEAST LOOKING INTO SERVING KUWAIT AND PERHAPS LOWER GULF AS WELL.

5. I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT USG TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT QUESTION OF US-GULF AIRLINE SERVICE IN VIEW OF THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF THIS AREA ECONOMICALLY TO UNITED STATES AND THE POLITICAL OVERTONES OF THE QUESTION. IF THIS AREA IS AS VITAL TO US AS WE SAY, AND WE BELIEVE IT IS INCREASINGLY SO, THEN HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF A US CARRIER HERE? FROM EVERY POINT OF VIEW INCLUDING AN EMERGING MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH KUWAIT, THE PROSPECTS ARE FOR BROAD-SCALE INCREASES IN US FREIGHT AND PASSENGER TRAFFIC THROUGHOUT GULF AREA.

6. IN ADDITION, I BELIEVE DEPT SHOULD GIVE DUE WEIGHT TO NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR INTERESTS HERE SHOULD KAC APPLICATION BE REFUSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON WHAT WILL APPEAR TO KUWAITIS AS UNFAIR LEGAL TECHNICALITY. ON OTHER HAND APPROVAL OF KAC APPLICATION WOULD BE POSITIVE US STEP THAT WOULD GIVE REAL BOOST TO US-KUWAITI RELATIONS. STOLTZFUS

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